

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present Reply, claims 1-10, 43, 44, 46-53, and 55-63 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 43, 46, 47 50, 55-57 and 60 are amended herein. Claims 11-42, 45, 54 and 64 were previously canceled.

Support for the amendment of claims 1, 43 and 55 is found, for example, in the specification from page 6, line 27 to page 7, line 2, and at page 7, lines 8-19. Claims 3, 4, 6, 46, 47, 50, 56, 57 and 60 are amended to address the Section 112 issue raised by the Examiner, and to clarify that the X may include -NH₂, -Cl and -Br. Previously, due to the placement of these substituents after the description of Z, it might have been unclear exactly where these substituents were used. Applicants respectfully submit that these amendments are fully supported in the application as filed.

Indefiniteness and Claim Objection Issues

Applicants respectfully submit that the objections to claims 3, 4, 6, 46, 47, 50, 56, 57 and 60 set forth on pages 8-12 of the Office Action are rendered moot by the amendments of these claims. Appropriate reconsideration and withdrawal of the various claim objections and indefiniteness rejections are respectfully requested.

Prior Art Issues

The claims stand rejected as obvious over several combinations of references, including the newly cited Osetrova reference (the abstract of an article entitled "Use of Ethylenediamine in Electroplating", Sbornik Nauchnykh Trudov-Institut Tsvetnykh Metallov im. M.I. Kalinina (1960), Vol. 33, pp. 396-399). All of the rejections rely upon Osetrova in combination with the other references.

Applicants note that, as clearly stated by the Examiner, Osetrova teaches replacement of sulfate and cyanide with ethylenediamine, so that in Osetrova the metal ions are added as the salt of ethylenediamine instead of the salts such as those now specified in Applicants' claims.

Applicants have amended the claims and the claims are believed to fully distinguish over and to be fully patentable over each of the cited references and/or combinations thereof. Specifically, none of the cited references are believed to disclose or suggest the inclusion of the ethylenediamine or its methyl-substituted derivatives; propylenediamine or its methyl-substituted derivatives; diethylenetriamine or its methyl-substituted derivatives; or a polymer of an aliphatic amine, in addition to and together with the other components

specified in the presently pending claims. As noted, Osetrova provides the "simple salts [of zinc, nickel, etc.] with ethylenediamine. In Applicants' claims, the ethylenediamine or its methyl-substituted derivatives; propylenediamine or its methyl-substituted derivatives; diethylenetriamine or its methyl-substituted derivatives; or a polymer of an aliphatic amine is provided to the bath in addition to the zinc salts and nickel salts specified in the claims. This combination as claimed fully distinguishes the present invention from the asserted combinations of references including Osetrova.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the presently pending claims address and overcome all of the rejections set forth in the Office Action mailed 13 February 2008, and that these claims fully patentably distinguish over the prior art of record. Notice to such effect is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application and claims are in condition for allowance and notice to such effect is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner consider that a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Applicants submit herewith the fee for a two month extension of time. In the event any additional fees are due in connection with the filing of this paper, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 18-0988, docket No. ATOTPO109US.

Respectfully submitted,
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